



STRONG HUSBAND

HOW TO BUILD A BETTER MARRIAGE INSIDE
AND OUTSIDE OF THE RELATIONSHIP

VAN SLYKE - MANTURITY.COM

AN INTRODUCTION TO STRONG HUSBAND

“The strength of a strong husband is knowing how to handle his marriage when he is with his wife and when he is away from her.”

Nearly every marriage book on the market is going to teach you how to keep your marriage healthy from within the marriage. Although that information is helpful, it leaves the husband clueless when it comes to keeping the relationship safe outside the marriage.

What do I mean? Husbands, and men in general, are much more visual and have a much harder time keeping their eyes off women other than their wife. So when he leaves his wife for work, play or something else, he is unprepared for the battlefield of other women that lies ahead of him. This book was made to change that and give husbands the tools they need to keep a strong marriage at and away from home.

Every chapter of Strong Husband addresses a way to love your wife better and make your relationship stronger. The majority of the chapters deal with specific ways to improve your relationship with your wife while the two of you are together. The other chapters consist of ways to keep your marriage strong when you are away from your wife.

Every chapter of Strong Husband also offers a marriage prayer as a final roundup of the chapter. After personally struggling in my first few years of marriage without asking God for His assistance, I have found it to be beyond beneficial to ask God into my life and my marriage. So whether you are Christian or not, consider the prayer at the end of each chapter and how it could impact your marriage. What do you have to lose?

Every chapter of Strong Husband finishes with a marriage challenge. Since each chapter is so different and tackles a specific topic, I offer you a challenge to make sure you are applying the principles or techniques offered in the chapter. Don't take these challenges lightly, or any of the information in each chapter. Choose to Man Up and accept each challenge. You are the leader of your marriage and it is your responsibility to make sure it is healthy and properly maintained.

In closing and as you embark on becoming a stronger husband and man, I pray you find the information informative and helpful. Instead of looking at each chapter and possibly getting offended or fear the possibilities of it; take on the challenges head on in your marriage and watch for the great results!

Your wife is waiting for you to stand up and lead!

Be the Strong Husband God has called you to be and she is waiting for you to be!

-Bryan Van Slyke

-Author/ Founder of Manturity.com

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5 QUESTIONS EVERY MAN SHOULD ASK HIMSELF BEFORE MARRIAGE

“Every strong husband would be wise to consider these five questions and how they apply to their own marriage. “

Don't you just love coming across an engagement announcement and seeing the image of two people deeply in love and ready to spend the rest of their lives together?

For you married ones out there, doesn't that take you back to the same moment? The moment when you thought you were ready to take on the responsibility of some-

one other than yourself. Or do you just think, "Man, I wish someone would have told me the truth about marriage or at least helped me prepare better".

The most preparation couples get these days comes in the form of simple words or phrases. "Congratulations." "How exciting." "You two are perfect for each other." "Marriage can be tough, but you'll get through it."

I don't like to be the bearer of bad news or real life, but when a man comes up to me these days and says he's about to get married or just got married, those are not the phrases I choose to use. Alright, I'll most likely congratulate him, but then I like to follow with some serious questions. These questions may not hit him at the moment, but eventually he'll remember them and either ask you about them again or sit down and really think about his marriage.

Here are 5 Questions Every Man Should Ask Himself before Marriage.

1) Am I a Man of my Word?

Have you ever heard the phrase "A man is only as good as his word". I mostly hear it on television shows and from the older gentlemen I encounter on occasion. I use to shrug off this phrase until I applied them to my Vows. Now, as you prepare for marriage, I challenge you to consider the value of your word. Before you step up to the plate of marriage, seriously consider what your vows are and find out if you're ready to be a man of your word.

2) Am I prepared to Love?

Gentlemen, love is a language that your wife speaks and understands much better than you, but it's an area you need to improve in quickly. Yes, you need to be respected in the marriage, but your wife is all about love. Do you know or have you considered what love looks like or means to her? If not, I challenge you to ask her what love means to her. How can you better show it in your conversations, your actions and in your emotions? Start doing those things today.

3) Am I ready to be selfless?

In early marriage, I thought selfless meant doing something for my wife so that I could get something out of her in return. Now, much more seasoned and mature, I understand that the real approach to selflessness is doing whatever it takes to please and

love my wife and not expecting anything in return. I challenge you to consider this mindset the next time you do household chores, work those extra hours at the office and even when being intimate. Learn to be selfless in your marriage and the rewards might just surprise you.

4) Am I prepared to Lead?

No longer are the days of being led by school teachers, professors or your parents. As the husband, you are now called to the leadership role in your marriage. Leadership not only requires the steps mentioned above, but it also requires things such as sacrifice, willingness, humility and gentleness. I challenge you to consider what it really means to be a leader in your marriage. Ask some of the men at your Church what it means to them, consider what your father or mentor taught you over the years and pray daily that God would make you a wise and mature leader.

5) What do I want my marriage to look like in 5 years?

Remember all of those exciting comments you received when you were first married or engaged? Now imagine those same comments being said 5 years into your marriage. Looking and planning ahead in my marriage was not something I thought about at first. If you're in love, you'll be perfect and in love forever, right? Wrong. Your marriage will always take work to make it great and make it last. I encourage and challenge you to sit down with your wife (or soon to be wife) and talk about what you want your marriage to look like in 5 years? If you can't come up with any ideas, take each of the next nine chapters and discuss how you can handle each area with your wife. I won't say doing that will be easy, but in five years you might be glad that you did.

MARRIAGE PRAYER

Father, thank you for the beautiful woman you have blessed me with in my life. Please help me to consider each of these questions in my own marriage and continue to grow in each area. Amen.

MARRIAGE CHALLENGE

Grab a pen and paper. Write down each of the questions and answer them for your own record. When complete, keep it in a safe place make a schedule to review them on a yearly basis.



3

A STRONG HUSBANDS NEEDS

“Every strong husband would be wise to consider what his needs are and express those in a loving way to his wife.”

We are all selfish therefore we all have needs. Whether single or married, men and women have different needs. Above all, I think the need we hear most about is love. The thing about love though is that it is more of a woman’s need than a man’s need. Are we together still?

Go up to any man and ask him what he needs the most from either a man or woman. I would bet to say that 95% of the time, a man is going to say respect. Well what does respect look like to a man? How does a man gain or maintain respect? Especially in his marriage.

Overall, respect is pretty cut and dry, just like your average man. The problem for most men is that as bad as they need it, they don't tell their wife what it looks like or how she can show it to him. In the mean time, since she understands love, she will continue to drive "love" into him and in most cases the man will shut down. So here's what I have listed below: the five BIG needs of a husband. Respect is still at the top of the list, but I have added a few aspects of it along with some thoughts on desire at the end.

"However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband." - Ephesians 5:33

Here are the 5 BIG needs of a Husband.

1) **Show Respect**

What is the actual definition of respect? The actual term means to hold in esteem or honor. When was the last time you felt like you were held in honor or esteem and wives, have you ever thought about your husband's position in this way?

It has taken a few years for my wife to understand what it means to respect me and for me to love her, but with more honest and open lines of communication, we are figuring it out. A quick example of a time I felt disrespected was when we were in a large group of people and I answered a question incorrectly. She immediately told everyone that I was wrong and corrected me in front of everyone. Although this seems like a mild case, my anger rose to the roof and I completely shut down. My honor and respect had been destroyed by my own wife along with everyone else in the room. Fortunately, we were able to talk about it on the way home and resolve it. The interesting part was that she had no idea that this situation spoke disrespect. And because she is a wonderful wife, she makes every effort to not do this again.

Men, does your wife understand what respect means to you? Do you know what it looks like? If you're struggling in your marriage, sit down with your wife and let her know what respect looks like to you in a very loving way. Do it today!

2) Show Appreciation

I don't know how else to say it, but men love to be appreciated. Even if we just took out the trash, we love to know that you noticed and are grateful. Call us shallow if you will, but it is just the way we were built. Here are a few other examples of appreciation: "Thank you for working hard each day for our family", "Thank you for being a present and supportive father", "Thank you for being a faithful husband". Just as your wife needs to hear the words "I Love You" often, we need to hear the words "I Appreciate You".

Let's take this thought a step further though. A couple of years ago, my beautiful wife and I decided to be grateful for all of the little things we do for each other as often as possible. What does this look like? "Thank you for making a great dinner", "Thank you for mowing the lawn, it looks great", "Thank you for doing the laundry". There are no limits to showing appreciation for your spouse. The real trick is learning to be consistent. And be careful to never get into the habit of assuming your spouse knows your grateful or knows they love you. SAY THE WORDS AND SAY THEM OFTEN!

Men, are you leading a marriage that is appreciative and thankful? Dig deep this week and show appreciation to your wife for the many things she does for you. Before long, you will hear the words coming back to you. Do it today!

3) Show Support

Showing support is a big part of respect. Wives, sometimes you may have to be supporting something crazy, but a husband needs to know you support him and will root for him. What are some examples of support? "You did a great job on completing that project for work", "You played a really great game tonight".

One of the great ways my wife shows support for me is through my writing. I love the fact that she has this site saved on her favorites, she will engage with me about posts I have written and on occasion she will tell me how proud she is of me that I continue to write. All of that is a huge encouragement to me and I love the support.

Men, are you struggling with this in your marriage? Again, this might be an area that your wife does not understand. In a loving way, let her know that you need and appreciate her support. Do it today!

4) Be Encouraging

It can be a bold and brutal world out there, and sometimes the only encouragement we can depend on is from our wife. This is another critical aspect of respect and the needs of a man. What are some examples of encouragement? “Don’t give up, you’re doing a great job”, “Keep up the great work on the housework”, “Don’t worry, keep up the great work, the finances will pick up soon”.

There have been many times in my own marriage where I have been down or depressed and my wife has been there to encourage me and lift me back up. Wives we need to know that you are our biggest fan!

Men, if you feel like you don’t get any appreciation from your wife, let her know in a loving way this week. In the meantime, continue to encourage her in all of her endeavors. Do it today!

5) Be His Desire

In most cases, men and women see desire in a much different way. One of the main reasons is that men are much more visual than women. How does a man deal with desire in marriage? First of all, you keep your eyes on your wife. As they say, “The grass is always greener where you water it”. Men, we must stay focused on our wives inner and outer beauty and not get trapped into the false desires that the world tries to offer us. Wives, when we comment on your beauty in any way, embrace it! No matter how you feel about yourself or what other people say, indulge in the love and affection that your husband is showing you. Your simple embracing will give him the encouragement to continue doing it.

I struggled with telling my wonderful wife how beautiful she was when we were first married. I went with the “assumption” route as I mentioned above and figured she knew what I thought about her. This is the wrong path, just as men need to hear encouragement, wives need to hear that their husbands love them.

“I WILL KEEP MY WIFE AS MY DESIRE”. ” I WILL KEEP MY HUSBAND MY DESIRE”. If you are having issues in this area, put your line above somewhere where you can see it everyday and be reminded. Do it today!

Men, I chose to share this article because I wanted to make you aware of your needs. Yes, these are my personal needs, but I think you can relate on many levels. In order for your marriage to grow and eventually thrive, you need to have a good understanding of your needs. Once you have a good understanding, you need to take some time and share them with your wife. Let her know what they are, what they look like and mean to you.

By you and your wife understanding your needs, you have a better chance of keeping the marriage on the right track. You will have a fighting chance of not seeking your needs to be met by another woman.

MARRIAGE PRAYER

Father, thank you for allowing me to share my life with such a wonderful woman. As I consider my needs, please help me to consider the needs of my wife. Teach me how to have a marriage that chooses to please you Father and not just ourselves. Thank you. Amen.

MARRIAGE CHALLENGE

Grab a pen and paper, or get a journal to keep track of your answers to each question. Take some time and consider your top five needs. Once you have them, pray over them. Then approach your wife with love and express those needs to her. Allow her to do the same.



3

5 THINGS EVERY MARRIED MAN SHOULD DO AROUND SINGLE WOMEN

“Every strong husband would be wise to consider his conversations and actions with woman other than his wife.”

A wise man once told me that when I find myself around single women, especially when I find them attractive or interesting, I should mention my wife and family early in the conversation. I have found this advice to be very useful on many occasions.

Fellow husbands, I have found the above advice and the other tips at the bottom to be essential in keeping my marriage healthy and strong. I want my marriage strong

and healthy and so should you! In fact, it's one of your biggest responsibilities in your marriage.

So let's dig deeper into this subject. Where are some common places where you might run into this scenario? For many of you, it could easily happen at work. You could be starting a new job and find yourself around a lot of nice, new women. When this happens, you have to make the choice to embrace their attention or extinguish it in a friendly way by mentioning your beautiful wife and family. For some of you, you have been working around the same women for some time. You might have had the choice many times to engage in flirty conversation or go out with co-workers after work. If this is you and your wife is at home waiting for you, then it's time to step back and assess your position as the husband and leader. Take the necessary steps to make your relationship with your wife the most important one again and don't forget it. Lead gentlemen, lead!

Even though those were just a couple quick examples, I know there are a few of you out there that need to step up your role as a husband. Those examples don't apply to you? Then consider who you know and talk to at your gym; the grocery store; the local hang out or wherever. These "simple" places could produce difficult relationships that will harm your relationship and love with your wife. Man up and do what needs to be done for your marriage!

Jesus said, "But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." -Mathew 5:28

Now that I have your attention, here are 5 things every married man should do around single women.

1) KEEP YOUR RING ON

There are very few exceptions for when that ring needs to be off. Operating heavy machinery, swimming in shark infested waters, etc. If you are about to enter a situation that makes you look at your ring and consider if you need it on or not, LEAVE! RUN! GET AWAY FROM THERE! Seriously, get out of that situation, your vows, marriage, children and more depend on those important decisions.

2) HANG UP PICTURES OF YOUR WIFE AT WORK

A married man in this position would be wise to pick out a couple great and fun photos of him and his wife and keep them displayed at his office or place of work. Pick a time that was fun for two reasons: it will remind you why you love her so much and it will make for a great conversation tool when others, especially women, ask about it. Update the image as needed to keep the people around you knowing your relationship is continuing to grow. Get that picture up this week and extinguish those flames.

3) KEEP EYE CONTACT SIMPLE AND SHORT

Don't read this the wrong way; I'm not saying to be rude. I'm saying to be careful where your eyes travel and how long they travel for when you are in the presence of an attractive single women. You know that once you engage in the first serious look you have signed the dotted line for more eye trouble. Keep it short, keep it decisive and move on. Get back to that image posted at your desk. Go!

4) KEEP CONVERSATION GENERAL & PROFESSIONAL

If you work around single women, there is no question that conversation will come up. It's up to you on how you decide to speak with her. You can choose to keep it short and general, you can choose to keep it professional or you can choose to keep it off of those and allow it go places it shouldn't. Be polite, but very intentional in your conversations. If needed, again, always be ready to bring up something about your wife or family. Pull the pin, aim and distinguish. Safety first.

5) TALK ABOUT YOUR WIFE & FAMILY OFTEN

Did I mention anything about talking about your wife in conversation yet? I believe I did, but this last point brings the idea to a firm home. The single women you engage with each day, if you have to, should be no match to your wife and family. Your family should be your first priority wherever you are and with whomever you encounter each day. Yes, each and everyday. Keep it short, keep it simple and mention your beautiful wife. Now pat yourself on the back and keep it up.

[IMPORTANT NOTE] Oh, and no matter what you have done with your current relationships with single women, these steps can and should be started at anytime. Your wife's feelings are and will always be more important than the woman you need to take these steps with. Get on it!

I challenge you to take these bold steps for you, your marriage and your family. Again, it's your responsibility to LEAD!

Men, as the most powerful and shared articles ever written on Manturity.com, the actions you need to take that are listed out in the chapter are critical. I understand that you might not need to apply every step to every situation or you may not need to be as extreme as they come across, but the idea is that you need to protect your marriage when around other women.

By you being more aware and using these as tools, you have a much greater chance at keeping your marriage healthy and strong.

MARRIAGE PRAYER

Father, thank you for my beautiful wife. Help me to always see the beauty of her heart and her body. Give me strength Father around other women and help me to always honor my wife.
Thank You. Amen.

MARRIAGE CHALLENGE

Still have that paper or journal? Take a moment to consider the relationships you have with other women in your life. Maybe at work, the gym or even Church. Write down 5 ways you can make sure those relationships never go to far. If your up for it, speak to your wife about how both of you can protect your marriage better when around the opposite sex.



4

5 ADVANTAGES TO DOING DEVOTIONS WITH YOUR SPOUSE

“Every strong husband would be wise to continue learning and growing in his relationship with God and his wife.”

I can still remember opening all of the wedding gifts my beautiful wife and I received after we first got married. They ranged anywhere from a “sweet” vacuum, a nice new set of silverware and a lot of towels. These gifts aren’t meant to be like what you receive on your birthday, but they do come in handy. We made the best of it all and continued to open.

Towards the end of the pile, I opened up a smaller gift. It was a couple's marriage devotional. The title of it was Night Light. I believe you can still pick this one up and I'd highly recommend it. My new wife and I gave it a quick browse, smiled, and added it to the pile of other stuff. The problem was that most of the stuff was just, well stuff, but that little devotional was a great tool that we had no idea we needed. We were about to learn the hard way...

Let's move forward 4 years, about 4 years ago from now, when our marriage was on the rocks. Alright, I'll be honest, we were on the brink of divorce. Years of not communicating well, not working together and keeping God on the back burner was taking its toll.

The little devotional I mentioned earlier was stashed away some where. We only made it through a few of the chapters. We thought we were above all that Jesus stuff. We were wrong.

Now we fast forward to present day, and my wife and I are doing much better. Through the help of close friends and our pastors, we were able to give our marriage over to Christ and re-build our marriage. We are now going through the "Love and Respect" devotional. We try to do it at least once a week. We don't always accomplish it week to week, but we never let it go too long without doing it. This simple tool has made a huge impact in our marriage and it can impact your marriage as well. Not sure? Doesn't sound manly enough for you husbands out there? Let's dig in...

Here are 5 advantages to doing devotions with your spouse.

1) Keeps God at the center

It's simple, when each spouse is seeking to keep Christ at the center of themselves, it will ultimately keep Christ at the center of their marriage. As husbands, it is our responsibility to make sure we are keeping Christ first in our lives. Personally, I have to make sure I am seeking him in my daily work activities, my daily family activities and when I am alone. One of those activities is engaging in weekly or even daily devotions with your wife. It is a wonderful way to keep your marriage strong and keep Christ firmly planted at the center.

Doing devotions is a great way to keep Christ at the center of your marriage!

2) Brings you closer as a couple

When was the last time you and your spouse really sat down and had a quality conversation? I hope it was recently and helped you grow as a couple. Doing a devotion requires set aside and focused time. Doing a devotion will bring you closer as a couple because you are both engaging in something together. You both need to listen, focus and in some cases answer questions at the end. Television, games and even nice dinners can't provide this type of closeness.

Devotions will keep you close to your spouse in a loving and quality way!

3) Discuss new marriage topics and questions

"Hey honey, what could I do to improve our marriage?" Do you remember the last time your spouse came up to you and asked a question like that? Chances are, those type of in-depth questions are never asked, and they are exactly the ones we need to be asking! Doing a weekly or daily devotion with your spouse will bring up these kind of important questions, offer advice on how to act on these questions and allow for opportunities for each spouse to answer the questions. You'll be amazed at how much these questions could change and improve your marriage.

Devotions are a perfect way to ask those hard, but necessary questions!

4) Allows for prayer together

As a husband, even a Christian husband, I can admit that praying with my wife can be very difficult. Not because I avoid it, but because we have an enemy who does everything he can to make prayer strange and awkward. The advantage to doing devotions is that it will allow for the perfect opportunity to pray with and for your spouse. Even if it's short and to the point, God will use it to build a new closeness and trust between the two of you. Not sure what to pray about, just pray using the topic that was discussed in the devotion.

Devotions are the perfect way to open up your marriage for prayer!

5) Quality Time

And finally, doing a devotion with your spouse is about genuine quality time. It's a great time to decompress from the day, forget about work or the kids and focus on God and your marriage. Life, most of the time, is hectic and busy, and devotions are a

great way to relax and unwind with the one you love the most. Step up this week and establish a time of devotions with your spouse!

Devotions are a great way to spend quality time with God and your spouse!

Well, what are you waiting for!? Get your devotion this week and start building a stronger marriage!

MARRIAGE PRAYER

Father, thank you for allowing me to build a beautiful relationship with my wife. As our relationship grows, please help me to be aware of ways we can help our relationship mature. Help us to always seek you as a way to make our marriage stronger. Amen.

MARRIAGE CHALLENGE

This one is simple. Get online or get to your local book store and search for a marriage devotional. Don't waste anytime, get one and tell your wife that you'd like to take some time to do a devotional each week. This simple process will help your marriage grow dramatically!



5

WHY MARRIED MEN MUST DUMP THEIR SECRET CRUSH

“Every strong husband would be wise to keep their wife as their main point of affection and love.”

Oh, you don’t know who the secret crush is in your life? Well, maybe that’s because you have become too comfortable with looking forward to seeing the daycare girl, the grocery girl, the after work girl or even the Church girl. Still not following?

Background...

My buddy told me a story the other day about a married friend of his who had a “daycare girl”, and yes it was at the Church daycare. Each time this married man would show up to Church, he would gladly take the kids over to the daycare. Why? Because he wanted to see his “hush” crush. In other words, he looked forward to seeing a woman that worked there that hit all the right points in him. Something about her drew him in, in the worst way. I can’t verify if it was her look, her fragrance, her long or short hair, or just her personality. It was something though. That something was slowly destroying his marriage and he couldn’t even see it.

Personally...

I can’t sit here and type, and say that I have never struggled in this area. Early in my marriage and before I truly understood the consequences, I would somehow spot a beautiful woman. If I was at work, I’d get distracted with one woman in particular. If I went out with friends to a restaurant, a particular waitress might catch my eye and, you guessed it, I’d keep going back for looks. It required no communication between the two of us, the looking and wondering was enough. These innocent occasions became a primary contributor to the decay of my marriage. At the time, “I didn’t know or understand,” was a convenient excuse. But now I know and NOW I take action to protect my marriage. Oh, and by the way, NOW you know TOO! Keep reading...

Who might not understand?

First off, the newlywed man might not get what I’m saying. Why? Because when marriage is new and fresh, his bride is every bit his crush. In most cases, both spouses have attempted to be at the top of their game for each other. And there is very little history to make you want or think you need another woman.

Hear my words newlywed men, do everything you can to protect your marriage right from the start! Understand that looking at other women with lustful eyes will only damage the view you have for your bride. No matter what, do everything you can to make her the only woman gaining your affection. AND if you find yourself being brought into the beauty of another woman, do what you can to control your emotions, get out of the situation.

The second type of man who might not understand is the man in denial. Typically, this will be the man who has been married for some time. The years

have maybe taken its toll on the marriage and there is plenty of history to use as excuses. He might have one woman in particular he likes, or he might have multiples set up at different areas.

Hear my words men. Stop, look and listen men; are you in denial about the habits, thoughts and actions that are threatening your marriage? Are you blatantly permitting your marriage to be destroyed? Just because the years have rolled on, a nuclear argument had occurred, or the communication has dried up, doesn't permit us to fix our issues by finding someone else. Find help now! Get out of your comfort zone and talk about your marriage concerns with a trustworthy and stable married male friend or pastor. Hiding your problems will only seek to force you out of your comfort zone in a much more costly way. Let him know what has been going on in your marriage and seek to find a resolution to your problems. Whatever you do, do not seek advice on how to fix your marriage from one of the women you secretly (or openly) like.

What does the Word say?

A great section of verses for this type of scenario can be found in Mathew 19:1-10. The Pharisees are doing their classic test questions against Jesus about the topics of marriage and divorce.

Jesus responded with some critical information for them and for us. Having a secret crush is plain out sexual immorality. And this is one of the few reasons it is acceptable to entertain divorce. Another important thing to note is that husbands are to cleave to their wife. Husbands are to become ONE with THEIR WIFE, not their secret crush. Dig in and read the rest of this verse section if you haven't yet. Start praying now that, if you're in this scenario, God would bring closure and clarity to your situation.

What's the Bottom Line?

Your wife should be the only crush you have in your life (other than Jesus). She is the one you chose to say your Vows to and she is the one you swore your love to for the rest of your life. To seek a crush elsewhere would question your very integrity. It would violate the very laws of what it means to be a good and faithful husband.

And in the case you didn't read the above paragraphs and need to know why your secret crush could destroy your marriage. Here are 3 reasons why you need to stop seeing her and 3 ways to help you in the future.

Why you need to stop seeing her NOW.

- 1) Because you're are a ONE WOMAN man, and your wife deserves your all.
- 2) Because a secret crush will destroy you and your marriage (matter of time)
- 3) Because Jesus has made you one flesh with your wife. To betray your wife would be to betray Jesus.

3 tools to help you in the future.

- 1) Open up and be honest about your situation with a friend NOW. Confess it, explain it, seek forgiveness and start working past it.
- 2) The next time the opportunity comes up to see her. Man Up and either get in and get out or request that your wife handle the situation or duty at hand.
- 3) Get humble and start praying for your wife and your marriage. Make your focus more on Jesus and your wife. It'll change everything...

MARRIAGE PRAYER

Father, thank you for allowing me to find one woman and choose to honor and love her for the rest of my life. Help me to keep my eyes and heart always focused on her and You. Amen.

MARRIAGE CHALLENGE

Write down at least 5 things you love and cherish most about your spouse. Keep these things somewhere close to you or posted in your closet. Find ways to remind you everyday why you love and chose your wife!



6

HOW TO HAVE AMAZING SEX EVERY WEEK

“Every strong husband would be wise to stay sexually active and intimate with his wife on a weekly basis.”

If God created sex and marriage; then gave us the book on how it works together, shouldn't married Christians be having better sex than anyone else? I'll let you think about that one for a few moments...

It's not a secret that sex is a "hot" topic in today's world and culture. On one hand, the world seems to push sex into every movie, TV show and magazine ad. On the other hand, the Church hardly ever talks about it. Is it really surprising to understand why sex is so misconstrued these days? Well, I hope to clear things up in this post.

I personally grew up in a household that was very strict on the topic of sex. Turn the channel if needed, close the magazine and by all means don't talk about it! This, of course, made for an interesting few years at the start of my marriage. But God is good and He does reward patience. The five tips below come from the ups and downs of my own marriage and I hope that you leave this post with a renewed sense of your marriage and sex life. Now get reading...

"Do not deprive each other except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control." -1 Corinthians 7:5

Here are 5 ways you too can have amazing sex every week.

1) BE MARRIED

You can call me old fashion, or even crazy, but married couples are the ones having the most satisfying sex. If you don't believe me, start asking around. Marriage is essential for great sex because it establishes a solid foundation of trust. Real trust in a relationship allows for real openness and intimacy. Once both spouses are free to be open, the opportunity for great sex is released and well, it's amazing!

2) GREAT COMMUNICATION

The best marriages are the ones where spouses have great communication with each other. This doesn't mean there are never any issues or setbacks, but it does mean that they know how to work through them, resolve them and truly move on... Great communication is absolutely necessary for great sex – and not just in the bedroom, but all the time. As I have said in many of my marriage posts, she needs love and he needs respect. If you want to have great sex, **LEARN HOW TO LOVE AND RESPECT EACH OTHER UNCONDITIONALLY!** Start learning and practice raising each other up on a daily basis, rather than putting each other down. We always have to make a conscience choice when we respond, so make it positive.

3) MEET THE OTHER NEEDS

You need to learn what your spouses needs are away from the bedroom, so that you have the opportunity to meet their needs in the bedroom. You can go back to Chapter 3 to get into the topic of needs again. Your wife may like to keep the house clean, have a love note written to her on occasion, or she may like to get flowers just because. Men, if these are some of her other needs, than make notes or calendar reminders to do these things! Your husband may like to have the laundry done without asking. He may like sleeping in on the weekend or getting out with a buddy once a month. Ladies, if these are his other needs, than strive to make some of those things happen. Make it a point to serve your spouse and meet their other needs. This can only result in a stronger relationship and, yes, amazing sex.

4) FLIRT OFTEN

Take a minute and go back to the early days of your relationship – maybe before you were even married. Remember the excitement and the feelings that you had with your partner? Get back to those days by doing little things like cute text messages, random smooches, occasional teasing, long hugs and surprise date nights. These little things are not very hard to do, but you have to be intentional about doing them daily. After our long workdays, it's easy to bring work home and be a grump; but instead of doing that, leave work at work. Make the time you have with your spouse and family enjoyable and fun. Keep flirting, keep dating and keep the fire alive!

5) MAKE THE TIME

To be honest, you could do all of the things listed above and not get anywhere. Without making the time to be alone with your spouse all your efforts could be in vain. Depending on schedules, kids and other time thieves; you may need to make it a point to schedule the time out on a certain night of the week or at a certain time on the weekends. Sometimes you may have to sacrifice some sleep in order to be intimate. The point is, great sex requires a solid block of time and you have to be intentional in making sure this happens.

My prayer and hope is that this chapter helps you and your spouse have great sex every week. If your marriage is struggling, read this article together and agree to make the necessary schedule changes to make this a priority!

MARRIAGE PRAYER

Father, thank you for my beautiful wife. Thank you for her amazing body and heart! I pray that you would bless us with loving intimacy and a desire to seek each other in love often. May our actions be always pleasing to you.
Amen.

MARRIAGE CHALLENGE

Based off this chapter, write down your top five sexual needs and desires. Be honest and open. When complete, take some time to discuss your needs and desires with your wife in a loving and open way. Allow her to do the same. Great communication about sex and make for, well, great sex!



7

WHY MARRIED MEN SHOULD NOT SEEK MARRIAGE ADVICE FROM ANOTHER MARRIED WOMAN

“Every strong husband would be wise to seek marriage advice from either prayer with God, his wife or a close friend or counselor.”

Let’s get right to the facts. A little under three years into my marriage, it was anything but roses. The days of remembering our vows were long gone and communication had all but dried up. The only thing I needed to do was the last thing I wanted to do. What was it? Man up and talk to my wife.

Days, weeks and even months were passing along and I still couldn't bring myself to talk to my wife. Yes, of course, we could talk in general and even put on the necessary "everything is perfect" acts around friends and family members. But when it came to the life breathing, marriage saving words, well, they just couldn't come out of me. If you could admit it, many of you would agree with me.

So I did what I think many other men are doing in their marriages today. I went looking for help in all the wrong places. Here are a couple of the wrong places I decided to seek help.

- Another women, who I hardly knew, and wasn't even married
- Multiple online forums and message boards
- Family

I attempted to seek answers from the above options for months. People I had never even met would sympathize with me. They would tell me stories or share about their struggles and current bad situation. I felt like the woman understood me when we talked about my struggles, but I finally realized that she could never fix what I needed to fix. And although my family supported me in whatever I chose to do in life, I knew they were saddened and disappointed. These were all roads with dead ends and I was slowing learning that fact.

With time and my marriage ticking away, I finally decided to get humble and seek answers the right way. Here are a couple of the correct places I decided to seek help from.

- Consulting married men I know that have a good marriage
- Giving my marriage over to God and trusting Him
- And finally, honestly talking to my wife

Manning up and admitting my situation to a close friend and brother in Christ was the best move I made to start things out. I was so worried about shame that I never considered the idea that he had struggled in his marriage at one point and could share in my feelings. Talking to a good friend or even your Pastor about your marriage will lift a huge weight off your shoulders and you should do it sooner than later. He offered me sound advice, books to read and ears to listen.

Not only did my buddy offer me good advice, but he also encouraged me to start talking to God about my marriage. I wasn't praying for my wife or my marriage at the time. If you can relate, give these two things a try for at least a week. Seeking God's counsel may not bring immediate relief, but it will allow you to express your feelings more often. Don't knock it until you try it gentlemen.

And yes, I finally talked to my wife. Was it easy? NO! Was it the right thing to do? YES! Did she take it well? Not really, but my heart was finally on the table and a path to resolution could finally be started. To be honest men, sometimes your wife has no idea your even feeling the way your feeling. She might think the issue in the marriage is something completely different than what you think it is. All the more reason to sit down and speak to her in a loving tone about your marriage and the issues that need resolved.

What is the bottom line? As a married man, you should only be seeking counsel for your marriage issues from either a man or your wife. This isn't to say there is anything wrong with other women or to say that they couldn't offer sound advice. It's to say that YOUR marriage should be between you and YOUR wife, not another woman. Unless, of course, the woman is a counselor or a good friend that you and your wife are seeking mutual help from.

Still not convinced? Here are 5 reasons married men should not seek marriage advice from other women.

- 1) Your wife will most likely not know the woman you are talking to and you will be doing it without her knowledge.
- 2) You could start to use the advice in a negative way or against your wife.
- 3) If gone on for too long, you can easily start to build up an emotion and trust for the woman. Possibly leading to an emotional affair.
- 4) You are only "one flesh" with one woman, your wife! Read Mark 10:7.

5) Consider how your wife would feel and try to see the situation from her perspective.

MARRIAGE PRAYER

Father, thank you for the opportunity to communicate with such a wonderful woman. Please bless our marriage communication. Help us to be able to talk to one another about any and all problems we have. Or allow me to open up to a good friend about any issues that are or might be on my heart. Thank you, Amen.

MARRIAGE CHALLENGE

Write down at least five things you really need to talk to your wife about but have been holding back. Be open and honest. Now either set aside to speak to your wife about those things or set up a time to meet a good friend or Pastor to discuss. Don't let issues build up. Talk about them and find resolution now.



8

A STRONG HUSBANDS TONE

“Every strong husband would be wise to consider the tone he uses around his wife and make sure he speaks with love.”

Before my wife and I got married, we dated for about six years. Overall we had good communication, but we still had our issues here and there. After a few years of dating, we were hanging out at a little fair one night and our communication started to fail and the night started to get real sour, real quick. As she shut down more and more, I wondered what in the world I was going to do. Do I shut down? Do we call it a night and try to forget about this night ever happened? What do I do?

It was late and the night was already at its end, but I wanted to make her feel better somehow. We sat down on a lonely bench and didn't speak. I had won her a small, stuffed animal frog from a game earlier in the night; when things were going a little smoother of course. I'm not sure how it came to me, but I grabbed the frog and started speaking in a really cute, high pitched voice. I used the stuffed frog as the "decoy" and used this voice as my weapon of choice. After a few minutes of talking in this funny voice, she slowly started to smile. With a "win" in sight, I continued to pursue her. Within another few minutes she was laughing, the frog was a success and the voice became a favorite. God was truly looking out for me that night.

To this very day, almost 10 years later, I still use this voice as a way to make my wife laugh and win her over in "sketchy" situations. I'm not sure where the frog ended up though...

The main point is that we all have a tone. There are various tones that we can use to make each other happy, sad or angry. As your marriage progresses in years, these tones and our attitudes should mature so that we know when to use certain ones and when not to use others. With this in mind, I thought I would break down a Husband's tone into five categories. Feel free to add your own types of tone that had worked or not worked in your marriage in the comments.

Here are the 5 Tones of a Husband

The Regular

We know this voice as our "regular" voice. This is the tone that most people know us best by, the one you use the most and the one your wife probably likes the best. What do I mean "likes the best"? I can tell you that in any situation that requires a real discussion, my wife hates to hear me use any voice other than my regular tone. She doesn't want me to be funny, she doesn't need sarcasm, she wants the real me. Most of the time I will try the funny tone, but I will be quickly told, "I'm being serious"! I make the switch back quickly.

Remember that your regular Tone is the best extension of who you are; it is the most sincere, it is the most honest and it is the most trustworthy. Since we tend to use it the most, we must make sure we use it properly and protect its rights. Would you agree that your "regular tone" is your wife's favorite?

These are important points to remember as we start to explore the other tone options.

The Funny

This tone goes back to the story at the top of this post. I never planned on having this tone in my playbook, but God had other plans. I love to use this tone around my wife when we are messing around, having fun or if I get caught doing something stupid. This voice is a great way to get you out of sticky situations; at least it has been for me.

The real trick with this tone is confidence. Besides pulling this voice out for the occasional family member, this voice is specifically meant for my wife; although, I can see my four month old enjoying it in the near future. Don't be embarrassed when using this tone around her. This tone is meant to lighten up situations, to create some laughter in the marriage and keep you and your wife happy. Happy wife, happy life! Right gentlemen?

The Whisper

I call this the "whisper", but this can also be your soft tone. This tone is most often seen and used when your wife is having a bad day, when you walk up behind her and tell her how much you love her and of course in "intimate" moments. This is another tone that may require some confidence and experience. This tone most likely will pass on the feelings of love to your wife. Expressing LOVE to your wife in your tone is very important in your marriage relationship. She needs to hear this tone and the feelings that come from you along with it.

Men, don't be afraid to use this tone! There are numerous opportunities to use this tone, with these being a few of them. Get home from work, walk in the door, wrap your arms around her and whisper how much you love her. She prepped dinner for you, you ate it, you walk up behind her and tell her softly how much you loved the food and appreciate the effort she put into it. These are just a few quick ideas; I'll leave you to figure out more... The trick is softer than your regular tone, and more serious than your funny tone. Is the whisper tone in your arsenal?

The Angry

Yes, the angry tone. I would vouch to say that all men have this tone and are unfortunately quite good at using it. The question is do we know how to handle and maintain this tone? Upon first getting married, my wife and I found ourselves amongst a few heated battles. I had very little idea of how much damage my angry tone could affect her. The tone has a much deeper growl, usually followed up with intense eye and eyebrow action, and firm body language. This is far, far from the whisper tone and does not speak love.

This tone really doesn't take much confidence to pull off; in fact it's probably easy for you to do; maybe, too easy. This one on the other hand takes maturity and self control. A man needs to learn what his trigger points are and discuss these points with his wife. It will also help if the wife doesn't intentionally set off those points. When these heavier emotions and tones are shifted into high gear, a man needs to quickly learn to gain control and tone down the situation. Realize that the REGULAR tone may be better suited until the situation can get under control. Are you able to control your angry tone?

The Silent

Yes, I titled this last tone as the "silent" tone. It's amazing that the worst tone a man could possibly use in marriage is, well, no tone at all. In a sense, this tone is a step above the "angry". This tone tends to come into play when a husband feels ultimately disrespected and no longer thinks his words matter in the situation. What tends to come from this? More silence. A husband could take this tone and go for days and days without speaking to his wife in any way or legitimate form. Sure hi's and bye's make it, but the depth is gone. This tone can be just damaging to a marriage, when just a real conversation in your regular tone could start the process of resolution.

I struggled with this tone a ton early in my marriage. I would do something wrong, my wife and I would go at it; I would bite my lip and listen. After my lip was sore and the conversation moved nowhere, I'd enter into silent mode and be stuck there for weeks. Men, this is not resolution and accomplishes nothing. Man up, speak up and lead your marriage to resolution. Can you relate to the Silent tone?

MARRIAGE PRAYER

Father, thank you for making me aware of my tones and the way they could positively or negatively impact my marriage. Please help me be a husband that always chooses to honor my wife with my words and tone. Amen.

MARRIAGE CHALLENGE

Write down at least 3 tones you use in your marriage. Dig deep and be honest. Once completed, carefully consider how those tones could be impacting your marriage and the heart of your wife. Take some time to sit down with your wife and talk about each tone. Allow her to share her heart on each tone and allow her to share any other tones that you might not be aware of. Allow this to be a time of learning and fun!



9

4 WAYS TO KEEP YOUR MARRIAGE STRONG AROUND OTHER MARRIED WOMEN

“Every strong husband would be wise to consider his relationship and actions around other married women.”

In Chapter 3, I reviewed some basic tips on how to handle yourself around the single women you might encounter day to day. And while those tips may help you around those women, what are you suppose to do any different if you know the woman is married?

As a happily married man, I tend to see young, single woman as a little more dangerous for myself to be around. This isn't to say there is anything wrong with them, but more to do with how I handle myself around them. Personally, if there is no ring on her finger, that means there is a lot more opportunity to get into trouble. Even with simple hellos and smiles, I feel I walk on the edge of a cliff.

But with a married woman, I tend to feel more relaxed and approach her with a different attitude. Most of those ways are listed below. I can better relate to her, because I can better relate to her husband. I put myself in his position. This isn't to say a married woman could be struggling in marriage and be looking for the comfort of another man. This, of course, could happen.

The next time you head to work, arrive at the entrance of the gym or are just walking into a shop to get a coffee. Think about how you will act and react to the married women around you. Dig into these few ways of how to handle your self and apply them as needed.

Jesus replied, "the two will become one flesh"? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate." Mathew 19:4-6

Here are 5 Things Every Married Man Should Do Around Married Women.

1) Treat her with Respect, but Approach with the Basics

When a married man comes into contact with a new woman, he should proceed with respectful caution. The caution is not in any fear of the woman, but rather being mindful that your wife and marriage is of most importance and this new woman can do nothing to harm it. Unless you can verify if the woman is married or not, husbands, you should refer back to the basics.

The basics are the following: Keep your ring on, keep eye contact simple and short, keep the conversation general and professional and include your wife in the conversation. Read more about the basics in Chapter 3. Once you have applied the basics and discovered she is married, approach as you see fit with the remaining points.

2) Consider Her Husband

Imagine yourself walking in a busy mall or in a large crowd. Most honest men will admit that when they see attractive women walking the other way, they will look at her. This could of course happen by accident. But if the man concedes to going back for a second look, his eyes will shift to the man she is with and will most likely get a dirty look from him. Now let's turn the table around. Husbands, how do you respond to men that are checking out your wife in a similar way or any way? Typically, you will give the man that same dirty look.

Men, the point is that when you come into contact with a married woman, either by the nature of your work, hobby, Church, etc; take a moment and consider her husband. CONSIDER how you would want your wife treated in this situation. Think about this now and be ready.

3) Get Your Spouse Involved

If the relationship calls for a deeper level (i.e.: work together closely or often, involved together in extra-curricular activities, etc), consider inviting your spouse to a company or group get together. If circumstances call for a more of a daily relationship with another married woman, talk to your spouse and set up a date or hang out night. This is a great way to establish boundaries, get to know each other and build up some trust.

Getting your spouse involved will let others now that your marriage is strong, first and foremost in your life. This time will also allow you to get to know her husband and gain his respect. If you find yourself needing to do this, don't wait, set something up today!

4) Never Speak About your Marriage in a Negative Tone

My hope and prayer is that the majority of married women have a great and solid marriage. This, of course, is a wonderful thing. Husbands, my fear is that when you encounter a happily married woman, you recognize that quality and pursue questions about her marriage and seek advice for your marriage. This could of course open the door for you to share intimate or personal things about your marriage.

Understand men, that the only woman you should be expressing your marriage issues with is your wife! The only time you should seek counsel with another woman

about your marriage is through professional counseling and your wife should be invited or at least know about it.

Husbands, these are just a few quick ideas and ways for you to help protect your marriage. Don't underestimate the power of another woman in your life that you have to deal with on a day to day basis. Stick to some of the ideas above and come up with more ways to make sure your wife stays at the top.

And finally, don't sit back and think you'll never need these tools. At worst, keep them in your back pocket and pull it out when the time arrives.

MARRIAGE PRAYER

Father, thank you for my marriage and for the marriage of those other people I encounter everyday. May you lead and show me how to love my wife better everyday and how to talk women that are not my wife. Thank you. Amen

MARRIAGE CHALLENGE

Think of at least 3 other married couples that you know. They can be from work, local friends or from Church. Now think about how you have treated them in the past. Whether, it was good or bad, confirm with yourself now that you will aim to honor their marriage and relationship. If there is something you need to confess or seek forgiveness about, do that now!



10

10 SIMPLE WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR MARRIAGE

“Every strong husband would be wise to consider simple ways that he could improve his marriage everyday!”

Did it ever occur to you that the reason your wife doesn't feel beautiful, hot or special is because of some very specific things you are doing wrong? Who you? Yes you!

As men, it is part of our responsibility to make sure the woman you love feels special and wanted. As a challenge, kick-start your romance by reading the Song of Solomon together. Each person can read their parts and let the night take you from there. You'll wonder how this information ever made it into the Bible. As you wrap up your

Strong Husband journey, consider these 10 ways that could help improve your marriage today!

Here are 10 simple actions to improve your marriage today!

1) **Greet Her First.** Once I get home, I make it a goal to kiss her first (and smile). My phone gets put away, the current state of the house isn't taken into account and my boy can have my attention in a minute. She gets my first fruits.

2) **Listen to Her.** I get it, you had a hard and long day. But there's a good chance she did too. Ask her how her day was and if anything of note happened. If she's working on a project or hasn't been feeling good, make following up on those items a priority.

3) **Pray for Her.** I admit that I sometimes have a hard time praying with my wife, but I find myself praying for her (and my son) very often. Pray for her when you leave for work in the morning. Pray for her work, her projects or her spirit. She may not see it, but she'll feel it.

4) **Touch Her.** Look, I didn't write the Song of Solomon, but there was some serious loving going on there. Make her feel special by giving her a random shoulder rub, foot massage or just a long hug. Be intentional, but don't over do it gents.

5) **Write Little Notes.** Quick tip: Get to a little book or paper store and buy some post it notes you can use for little love notes. Leave one of these with her each week or every other week and she'll keep the warm fuzzies for you.

6) **Lock Up Your Eyes (or Heart).** A critical flaw a lot of men have these days is thinking they can flirt, talk and look at other women (that they find attractive) and think it won't negatively affect the relationship. Set up boundaries gentlemen! Keep that ring on. Post a photo of your wife at work and talk about her often. Keep them eyes locked and you'll keep your bride happy.

7) **Speak Up!** Don't assume she knows that you love her, TELL HER! I suffered in this category terribly when we were first married. I was stubborn and dumb (probably still are a little bit) back then and rarely told her my heart. Tell her she's

beautiful often. Tell her your favorite parts about her. Tell her she does a great job at work or raising the kiddos. Say something meaningful often!

8) **Let it Go.** In more familiar words, forgive. One truth that will never change about marriage is that it is between two humans who are both imperfect. You make mistakes and she'll make mistakes. The key is learning how to forgive each other and move on. Don't let things just linger; talk about them and resolve them. You can do it!

9) **Take the Responsibilities.** This can go back to the first and second action mentioned above. Once you greet her and talk to her, get a good gauge as to where her heart is at. If she seems overwhelmed or tired, take the chores for the night. Wash the dishes, throw in a load of laundry or just go pick up dinner instead of making her cook.

10) **Do a Devotion Together.** At least once a week make it a point to do a small devotional with your wife. You can do this easily by buying a specific marriage devotional, by picking a part of scripture to read (like the Song of Solomon) or by just talking about what Christ is doing in each others life. It's not as hard as you think...

MARRIAGE PRAYER

Father, thank you for allowing me to be aware of so many ways to keep my marriage strong and healthy. Allow me to consider each point and show me how I can improve my marriage everyday. Thank you for showing me so many ways to become and stay a Strong Husband. Thank you. Amen

MARRIAGE CHALLENGE

Consider the points in this chapter and write down 5-10 ways that you could start improving your marriage this week. And instead of sharing them with your wife, just start doing them everyday!

DEDICATION

As my first official book on the topic of marriage, I would like to dedicate this work to my wonderful and beautiful wife, Chelsea.

Without her unlimited support and unyielding love, I would not have been able to create any of this powerful content. Her love and inspiration has helped shape me into the man I am today and the man I will become in the future.

I also want to thank my first son, Brayden. As he is too young too understand any of this information, I pray he would live up to these standards in his future relationships.

And above all else, I want to thank God for his grace and mercy on me. Without it, I would not be able to do any of this work or make nearly as big of impact.

May this information always honor you!

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